



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE

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## **Tennessee Athletic Commission elects its officers Panel issues warning on unsanctioned sports events**

Nashville, TN -- The Tennessee Athletic Commission has elected its officers and is in the process of adopting its rules, approving forms and fees governing events related to the combat sports of boxing and mixed martial arts (MMA).

The Commission met for the first time on September, 5, 2008, and heard reports that amateur and professional fighting matches had been taking place or were being scheduled to take place at various venues without being permitted or sanctioned by the State of Tennessee.

The Commission considers any amateur and professional unarmed combat sports event to be illegal, until the Commission has established its rules, has approved the necessary forms and fees and has issued permits to conduct these sporting events. Any amateur event not conducted by a school, college or university would be illegal unless and until the Commission recognized and approved a sanctioning organization in accordance with State codes. The Commission believes that any participant in such illegal events should be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible.

Public Chapter No. 1149 of the Public Acts of 2008 enacted the "Tennessee Athletic Commission Act of 2008" to create the Commission as an independent entity of State government administratively attached to the Department of Commerce and Insurance, as of July 1, 2008.

The Commission comprises nine members appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. Those members are Jack Sammons of Memphis, Chuck Clark of Jackson, Dr. Neal Frauwirth of Cleveland, Steve Hannah of Brentwood, Stuart Howard of Millington, Terri Mast of Brentwood, D.K. Joe Smith of Chattanooga, Dr. Kurt Spindler of Franklin and Scott White of Brentwood. At the meeting, the Commission members elected Sammons to be the Chairman and Smith to be the Vice Chairman.

The Commission is scheduled to meet next on September 30, 2008, to discuss rules for the conduct of professional events and to review sanctioning organizations for amateur events. Footage from Commission meetings will be viewable at [www.tn.gov/commerce/athletic/](http://www.tn.gov/commerce/athletic/).

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